

John 14:8-17 [25-27]

Hope. What a powerful word, yet what an elusive concept at times. Hope is the anchor for our souls when the storms of life rage, it is the light that beckons us through the darkness. But what does true hope look like? Is it merely wishful thinking, or is it grounded in something greater than ourselves? Today, let's look at John 14:8-17 [25-27], our Gospel reading for today, to explore the hope that Jesus offers—a hope that is not fleeting, but eternal and abiding.

In this text, we find the disciples of Jesus grappling with confusion and uncertainty. They are sitting in an upper room, expecting Jesus to overturn the Roman rule, wondering once how their dreams of once again becoming a great nation will come about. Yet Jesus offers them something far deeper than political victory. He offers them hope—not in their plans, but in God's divine plan. Through his teachings and the promise of the Holy Spirit, Jesus reveals that hope is not about the absence of trouble but the presence of God.

The passage begins with Philip's request: "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." (John 14:8). Can you feel the longing in those words? Philip, like many of us, desired proof, a visible reassurance that will quiet his doubts and strengthen his faith. But Jesus responds in a way that shifts Philip's perspective entirely: "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" (John 14:9).

This exchange reveals the first cornerstone of hope: knowing the Father through Jesus. Hope is not rooted in external circumstances but in the unchanging nature of God. Jesus reminds Philip—and us—that to know Jesus is to know the Father. This relationship is the foundation of hope, for it assures us that God's presence is not distant or abstract. It is personal, intimate, and abiding. Consider this for a moment. How often do we, like Philip, yearn for visible signs or immediate answers? Yet Jesus invites us into a deeper hope—a hope that rests not on what we see with our eyes but on what we know in our hearts. Jesus himself is the revelation of the Father's love and the embodiment of his promise. In him, we are reminded that God is always near, even when life feels uncertain.

Jesus continues, saying, "Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father." (John 14:12). What an astounding statement! Not only does Jesus promise that those who believe in him will carry forward his works, but he declares that they will do even greater works.

This is the second cornerstone of hope: the works of faith, not to be saved, but to carry out God's will. Hope is not passive; it is active. It calls us to step into the plans and purposes of God, trusting that God will empower us to accomplish what seems impossible. The disciples, sitting in that room, could not yet comprehend the magnitude of this promise. But through the Holy Spirit, they would later go on to spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth, performing miracles, transforming lives, and building the Church.

For us today, the same promise holds true. Hope compels us to act—not out of our own strength, but out of our faith in God's strength. When we face challenges, when the road ahead seems impassable, we can cling to the assurance that God equips us for every good work. Greater works are possible because of the Holy Spirit, who dwells within us, guiding and empowering our efforts.

As Jesus speaks further, he offers one of the most profound promises in this passage: "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth." (John 14:16-17). Here, Jesus introduces the Holy Spirit, the Advocate who will abide with the disciples—and with us—forever.

The Holy Spirit is often referred to as the Spirit of truth, a title that highlights his role in illuminating the truth of God's Word and guiding us in righteousness. The Spirit is not held back by time or place; the Spirit is with us always, working within us to transform our hearts, renew our

minds, and strengthen our faith. Through the Spirit, Jesus' teachings are continually brought to life, reminding us of his promises and empowering us to live according to God's will.

This is the third cornerstone of hope: the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. In moments of fear, doubt, and loss, the Spirit is our comforter and guide. He is the one who whispers peace into our anxious hearts, who intercedes for us when we cannot find the words to pray, and who equips us for the work God has called us to do. The disciples could not fully grasp the significance of this promise in that moment. They were still reeling from Jesus' words about his impending departure. But Jesus assures them that his absence does not mean they will be abandoned. Through the Spirit, his presence will remain—teaching, reminding, and empowering them.

For us, this promise is equally transformative. The Spirit of truth dwells within us, pointing us toward Jesus, illuminating God's Word, and sustaining us through trials. When our hearts feel troubled, when fear threatens to overwhelm us, we can turn to the Holy Spirit, knowing that we are never alone.

Finally, Jesus offers a gift that encapsulates all the hope he has spoken of: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives." (John 14:27). This peace is not the fleeting tranquility that the world offers, dependent upon circumstances and not likely to last. It is the peace of God—steadfast, eternal, and beyond understanding.

This is the fourth cornerstone of hope: peace that transcends fear. Jesus acknowledges the disciples' fears and uncertainties but urges them not to let their hearts be troubled or afraid. His peace is rooted in the assurance of God's presence and the fulfillment of God's promises. It is a peace that allows us to endure trials, face uncertainty, and trust in God's sovereignty.

As we reflect on what we have heard today from the Gospel of John we are reminded of the profound hope that Jesus offers. It is a hope that knows no bounds—a hope rooted in the knowledge of the Father, activated through the works of faith, sustained by the Holy Spirit, and crowned with peace.

This hope does not promise that life will be free of hardship. The disciples certainly faced trials far beyond what they could have imagined in that upper room. But through it all, they discovered the depth of Jesus' promise. They carried forward his teachings, empowered by the Spirit, and lived lives of faith and purpose.

So, what does this hope mean for us today? It means that we can stand firm, even when life feels uncertain. It means we can trust in God's presence, act in faith, rely on the Spirit's guidance, and find peace in his promises. It means that we can carry forward the works of Jesus, knowing that greater things are yet to come.

May we hold fast to this hope—a hope that abides forever in the promise of God. All glory be to God.